

Message Text

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EXDIS

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TAGS: OVIP (MONDALE, WALTER F.), ID
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR ASHARI'S COMMENTS ON VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S
VISIT

1. INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. ASHARI TOLD ME MAY 10 THAT PRESIDENT SUHARTO HAD EXPRESSED TO HIM THE PREVIOUS DAY HIS PERSONAL PLEASURE AT THE SUCCESS OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S VISIT. SUHARTO SAID HE FOUND THE VICE PRESIDENT TO BE COMPLETELY FRIENDLY AND OPEN AND TO HAVE AN EXCELLENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE INDONESIAN SITUATION. ACCORDING TO ASHARI, SUHARTO IS NOW FAR MORE REASSURED THAN PREVIOUSLY REGARDING THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF U.S.-INDONESIAN RELATIONS AND THE CONSTANCY OF OUR INTEREST IN AND ASSISTANCE TO THE ASEAN AREA.

2. THE FOLLOWING ARE ASHARI'S COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC MATTERS RAISED WITH HIM DURING HIS CONSULTATIONS FOLLOWING THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT:

A. RELEASE OF DETAINEES. IN HIS TALK WITH ASHARI, SUHARTO EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE "MORE LOGICAL" TO RELEASE THE 10,000 DETAINEES THIS YEAR IN SMALL GROUPS. COMPLETING THE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THESE ACCELERATED RELEASES IS, HOWEVER, DIFFICULT, AND IT IS NOT REPEAT NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE A FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT AT THIS TIME THAT SO MANY WILL BE RELEASED
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ON CERTAIN SPECIFIC DATES. A GOOD DEAL OF PREPARATORY WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE. NONETHELESS, SUHARTO HAS AGREED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF PHASED RELEASES IN 1978. ASHARI ADDED THAT ADMIRAL SUDOMO HAD TOLD HIM IN A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION THAT ABOUT 5,000 WOULD BE RELEASED ON INDONESIA'S NATIONAL DAY, AUGUST 17.

B. SALES OF LNG. ASHARI SAID SUHARTO EXPRESSED HIS PARTICULAR

PLEASURE AT THE BREAKTHROUGH REGARDING THE SALE OF INDONESIAN LNG TO THE U.S. SUHARTO HAD STRESSED TO HIM THAT THIS WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO FINANCE INDONESIA'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. ASHARI SAID THAT SUHARTO, AND ALSO WIDJOJO WITH WHOM HE TALKED LATER, ARE FULLY AWARE THAT ADDITIONAL "TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS" ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE DECISION REGARDING THE PRICING FORMULA CAN BE CONSIDERED FINAL.

C. EAST TIMOR. REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF VISITS BY PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS TO EAST TIMOR, SUHARTO TOLD ASHARI THAT HE SAW NO OVERRIDING OBJECTION TO SUCH VISITS IF MEMBERS OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN EAST TIMOR FULLY ACCEPT THE FACT THAT EAST TIMOR IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF INDONESIA. (COMMENT: PART OF THE PROBLEM REGARDING VISITS BY THE CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE IS THE FACT THAT THE CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IN EAST TIMOR DOES NOT REPEAT NOT ACCEPT INTEGRATION. NEITHER DOES THE VATICAN. WE WILL FOLLOW UP WITH THE APPROPRIATE GOI OFFICIALS AND WITH CRS TO SEE IF WE CAN FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS BOX.)

D. U.S.-ASEAN DIALOGUE. ON THE U.S.- ASEAN DIALOGUE, SUHARTO TOLD ASHARI HE WAS PERFECTLY AGREEABLE TO HOLDING THE DISCUSSIONS THIS SUMMER AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL AS LONG AS HE COULD BE ASSURED THERE WOULD BE SUBSTANTIVE BENEFITS. ATTENDANCE COULD BE BY EITHER THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR ONE OF THE ECONOMIC MINISTERS, DEPENDING ON THE VIEWS OF OTHER ASEAN STATES.
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E. IGGI CHAIRMANSHIP. THIS IS NOT A SUBJECT WHICH AROSE DURING THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO INDONESIA, BUT ASHARI SAID THAT DURING HIS TALKS ABOUT THE VISIT BOTH SUHARTO AND WIDJOJO HAD VOLUNTEERED THAT THEY HOPED THE WORLD BANK WOULD TAKE OVER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE IGGI. I ASKED IF THIS WOULD BE RAISED AT THE FORTHCOMING MEETING, AND ASHARI SPECULATED THAT IT WOULD COME UP IN BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS AMONG THE DELEGATES OR PERHAPS IN WIDJOJO'S MEETING WITH THE HEADS OF THE VARIOUS DELEGATIONS ALONE.

F. M-16 PLANT. ASHARI SAID THAT ADMIRAL SUDOMO HAD TOLD HIM THAT HANKAM, WHICH HAS BEEN CONSIDERING SEVERAL ASSAULT RIFLES, WILL DEFINITELY OPT FOR AN M-16 COPRODUCTION PLANT. THEY WILL MOVE AHEAD RAPIDLY TO CONCLUDE THEIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH COLT AND HOPE THAT ADDITIONAL FMS FUNDING FROM THE UNITED STATES WILL BE FORTHCOMING TO FINANCE THIS PROJECT. ASHARI SAID HE WOULD ALSO BE PURSUING THIS ON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON.
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